

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for matching a color with a corresponding color in a defined color space, comprising:

scanning an object having the color to be matched to produce a color image data signal representative of said object;

mapping said color image data signal to the defined color space to ascertain the corresponding color; and

informing a user of the corresponding color.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising, using said corresponding color to match a color with the color to be matched.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the corresponding color has a reference number associated therewith, and wherein the step of informing a user of the corresponding color comprises the step of informing the user of the reference number associated with said corresponding color.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising, using said reference number to match a color with the color to be matched.

5. The method of claim 3, further comprising, displaying said reference number.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising, selecting a color region on said object, the color region

containing said color to be matched.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising, selecting a color region of said color image data signal, the color region containing said color to be matched.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said object comprises a plurality of colors, and further comprising selecting one of said plurality of colors as said color to be matched.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said object has a texture, and further comprising processing said color image data signal to remove the influence of said texture from the color image data signal.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein said defined color space comprises the Pantone Matching System.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein mapping said color image data signal to the defined color space to ascertain the corresponding color comprises using a color look-up table.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said color image data signal comprises a plurality of pixels, each having a red tristimulus value, a green tristimulus value, and a blue tristimulus value associated therewith, and wherein mapping said color image data signal to the defined color space to ascertain the corresponding color further

comprises:

computing an average red tristimulus value, an  
average green tristimulus value, and an average blue  
10 tristimulus value from the red, green and blue  
tristimulus values of one or more of said plurality  
of pixels; and

inputting the average red, green, and blue  
tristimulus values into said color look-up table to  
15 obtain the corresponding color.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein said color image  
data signal comprises a plurality of pixels, each having  
a red tristimulus value, a green tristimulus value, and a  
blue tristimulus value associated therewith, and wherein  
5 mapping said color image data signal to the defined color  
space to ascertain the corresponding color further  
comprises:

inputting the red, green and blue tristimulus  
values of one or more of said plurality of pixels  
10 into said color look-up table to obtain one or more  
reference numbers; and

computing an average reference number from said  
one or more reference numbers, the average reference  
number identifying said corresponding color.

14. A system for matching a color with a  
corresponding color in a defined color space, comprising:

scanning apparatus, said scanning apparatus  
scanning an object having the color to be matched,  
5 said scanner apparatus producing a color image data

signal representative of said object; and

a computer operatively associated with said scanner apparatus, said computer mapping said color image data signal to the defined color space to ascertain the corresponding color, said computer informing a user of the corresponding color.

15. The system of claim 14, further comprising:

at least one computer readable storage device operatively associated with said computer; and

computer readable program code for selecting a color region of said color image data signal, the color region containing said color to be matched, the computer readable program code being stored on said at least one computer readable storage device.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein said computer readable program code further comprises program code for allowing a user to select said color region.

17. The system of claim 14, wherein said object has a plurality of colors, and further comprising:

at least one computer readable storage device operatively associated with said computer; and

computer readable program code for selecting one of the plurality of colors as said color to be matched, the computer readable program code being stored on said at least one computer readable storage device.

18. The system of claim 14, wherein said object has a texture, and further comprising,

at least one computer readable storage device operatively associated with said computer; and

5 computer readable program code for removing the influence of the texture from said color image data signal, the computer readable program code being stored on said at least one computer readable storage device.

19. The system of claim 14, further comprising:

at least one computer readable storage device operatively associated with said computer; and

5 a color look-up table stored on the at least one computer readable storage device, said computer using the color look-up table when mapping said color image data signal to the defined color space to ascertain the corresponding color.

20. The system of claim 14, wherein said defined color space comprises the Pantone Matching System.